

JOSEPH A. BLANCHARD.

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APRIL 3, 1896.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House and ordered to be printed.

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Mr. FENTON, from the Committee on Military Affairs, submitted the following

REPORT:

[To accompany H. R. 6686.]

The Committee on Military Affairs, to whom was referred the bill (H. R. 6686) entitled "A bill to correct the military record of Joseph A. Blanchard, late first lieutenant of Troop E, First New York Mounted Rifles," beg leave to submit the following report and recommend that said bill do pass with an amendment.

This is a bill enacting that the Secretary be directed to correct the military record of Joseph A. Blanchard, late first lieutenant, and grant him an honorable discharge as of July 26, 1864.

Joseph A. Blanchard, who enlisted as a private and who had been promoted through the various grades to that of first lieutenant, resigned at the expiration of the three years. His resignation was indorsed that he must serve three years from the date of his muster as lieutenant, and he thereupon again tendered his resignation, hoping that its acceptance would be immediate and unconditional, and stating that on his mustering as lieutenant he was told that blanks were printed for enlisted men and that officers were mustered on that form; that it made no difference as to its binding effect on an officer for any specified time, and that he thereupon waived his objections and signed, though he preferred to remain an enlisted man rather than reenter the service for an additional three years.

This resignation was dated July 26, 1864, and was indorsed by Major-General Butler with a dishonorable dismissal for tendering resignation in the face of the enemy. On the next day the colonel, two majors, and a large number of the officers signed a testimonial to Blanchard's uniform gentlemanly conduct, gallantry, bravery, and his undaunted courage, which characteristics he had shown as a soldier for the last three years.

This dismissal was without court-martial, and without even notice to the officer affected, who seems to have desired to bring up and argue the question as to the term of his enlistment rather than to refuse to do military duty. Active operations of the force to which he was attached appear to have commenced about the time of his resignation, but before his dismissal. The record and copy of the testimonial and of the first resignation are annexed.

Your committee recommend that the bill do pass, with the following amendment:

*Provided, That no pay, bounty, or other allowances shall become due and payable by reason of the passage of this act.*

Reports from the War Department are appended.

RECORD AND PENSION OFFICE, WAR DEPARTMENT,  
*Washington City, February 21, 1866.*

SIR: In reply to your letter of yesterday, received to-day, in which you request to be furnished with the military record of Joseph A. Blanchard, late of the First New York Mounted Rifles, I have the honor to inform you that the records of this office show that Joseph A. Blanchard was enrolled July 24, 1861, as a private in Company A, First New York Mounted Rifles, to serve three years. He was appointed corporal October 9, 1861; sergeant November 13, 1861; first sergeant July or August, 1862 (the exact date is not shown); was mustered in as second lieutenant Company L, same regiment, to date April 29, 1863, and as first lieutenant Company E, same regiment, to date May 25, 1863.

Under date of July 26, 1864, from camp of the regiment near Point of Rocks, Va., he tendered his immediate and unconditional resignation, which was forwarded, disapproved, by the lieutenant-colonel commanding, and thereupon he was dishonorably dismissed the service in Special Orders, No. 208, Headquarters Department of Virginia and North Carolina, dated July 31, 1864, "for tendering his resignation in the face of the enemy."

The order of his dismissal was confirmed in Special Orders, No. 262, from this Department, dated August 8, 1864.

Very respectfully,

F. C. AINSWORTH,  
*Colonel, United States Army, Chief Record and Pension Office.*

HON. MAHLON PITNEY,  
*House of Representatives.*

CAMP FIRST NEW YORK MOUNTED RIFLES,  
*Near Point of Rocks, Va., July 24, 1864.*

MAJOR: I have the honor to tender the resignation of my commission as first lieutenant Company E, First Regiment Mounted Rifles. I entered the service on the 24th day of July, 1861, as an enlisted man for three years, and, having been promoted through all the grades to first lieutenant, I have served the term of my enlistment faithfully to this, the day of its expiration, and therefore ask for my discharge.

Hoping you will give this your immediate attention,

I have the honor to remain, your most obedient servant,

JOSEPH A. BLANCHARD,  
*First Lieutenant Company E, First New York Mounted Rifles.*

Maj. R. S. DAVIS.

CAMP FIRST REGIMENT NEW YORK MOUNTED RIFLES,  
*Near Point of Rocks, Va., July 26, 1864.*

MAJOR: I have the honor to tender my resignation as first lieutenant Troop E, First Regiment Mounted Rifles New York State Volunteers, and hope its acceptance will be immediate and unconditional.

I entered the service as an enlisted man for three years July 24, 1861, and was promoted to my present position.

At the time of my muster as an officer by Lieut. J. S. Hunt, Fourth United States Artillery, I objected to signing papers that would bind me for three years more; but his explanation to me that the blanks were printed for enlisted men, and that officers were mustered on that form, made no difference as to its binding effect upon an officer for any specified time, I waived objections and signed accordingly, preferring to remain an enlisted man rather than reenter the service for an additional three years.

Hoping this will meet with immediate attention,

I remain, major, very respectfully, obedient servant,

JOSEPH A. BLANCHARD,  
*First Lieutenant Troop E, First Regiment New York Mounted Rifles.*

Maj. R. S. DAVIS,  
*Assistant Adjutant-General.*

(First indorsement:) Headquarters First New York Mounted Rifles, July 28, 1864. Respectfully forwarded disapproved. A former application of this officer was indorsed at Department headquarters with decision of the War Department that officers must serve three years from the date of their last muster. A. G. Patton, Lieutenant-Colonel, Commanding Mounted Rifles.

SPECIAL ORDERS, }  
No. 208. }

HEADQUARTERS DEPARTMENT OF  
VIRGINIA AND NORTH CAROLINA,  
*In the Field, Virginia, July 31, 1864.*

(5) First Lieutenant James A. Blanchard, Troop E, First New York Mounted Rifles, for tendering his resignation in the face of the enemy, is hereby dishonorably dismissed the service, subject to the approval of the President of the United States.

By command of Major-General Butler.

R. S. DAVIS, *Assistant Adjutant-General.*

(Second indorsement:) Headquarters Department of Virginia and North Carolina, station Fortress Monroe, Va. Respectfully forwarded to the Adjutant-General of the Army. Benj. F. Butler, Major-General, Commanding.

(Third indorsement:) Adjutant-General's Office, Washington, August 8, 1864. Approved. By order of the Secretary of War. Thomas M. Vincent, Assistant Adjutant-General.

SPECIAL ORDERS, }  
No. 262. }

WAR DEPARTMENT, ADJUTANT-GENERAL'S OFFICE,  
*Washington, August 8, 1864.*

57. So much of Special Orders, No. 208, July 31, 1864, from Headquarters Department of Virginia and North Carolina, as dishonorably dismissed First Lieut. James A. Blanchard, Troop E, First New York Mounted Rifles, "for tendering his resignation in the face of the enemy," is, by direction of the President, hereby confirmed.

By order of the Secretary of War.

[SEAL.]

E. D. TOWNSEND,  
*Assistant Adjutant-General.*

CAMP FIRST MOUNTED RIFLES, NEW YORK VOLUNTEERS,  
*Near Point of Rocks, Va., August 1, 1864.*

First Lieut. J. A. Blanchard having left the regiment to which he has been attached, we, his brother officers and comrades in arms, desire to testify to his uniform gentlemanly conduct, to his gallantry and bravery, and the undaunted courage which has characterized his career as a soldier for the past three years.

B. F. ONDERDONK, *Colonel.*  
HENRY TERWILLIGER, *Second Major.*  
EDGAR A. HAMILTON, *Third Major.*  
GEO. C. BENNETT, *Surgeon.*  
B. H. ENGELKE, *First Lieutenant and Adjutant.*  
THOS. G. HENSEY, *First Lieutenant and A. C. S.*  
STEPHEN F. MILLS, *First Lieutenant.*  
WILLIAM H. RYAN, *Second Lieutenant.*  
THOS. FAIRGRIEVE, *Captain Troop I.*  
W. PURDY, *First Lieutenant Co. D.*  
H. S. DICKINSON, *Second Lieutenant Troop L.*  
S. E. REYNOLDS, *Captain Troop D.*  
MELVILLE C. WEEKS, *First Lieutenant Troop F.*  
SAM'L M. BROWN, *Second Lieutenant Troop M.*  
J. W. BURTON, *First Lieutenant Co. M.*  
WM. HEARNE, *Second Lieutenant Co. H.*  
DAVE GODFREY, *Second Lieutenant Co. D.*  
WESLEY B. CORBY, *Second Lieutenant Troop E.*  
OWEN HALF, *Second Lieutenant Troop F.*

CAMP FIRST MOUNTED RIFLES, NEW YORK VOLUNTEERS,  
*Near Point of Rocks, Va., August 1, 1864.*

This is to certify that First Lieut. Joseph A. Blanchard is responsible for no public property of any kind whatever, either in the troop or regiment.

WESLEY B. CORBY,  
*Second Lieutenant, Commanding Troop E, First Mounted Rifles.*  
WILLIAM H. RYAN,  
*Second Lieutenant and Acting Regimental Quartermaster.*

